

Reconceptualization of Themes Violence, Corruption in Dystopian Literature by Mario Vargas Llosa

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Abstract

The definition of dystopia has undergone various changes, one of which is the one connected to pandemic fiction. In these articles, scenes of fear, worry, and surveillance in civilizations afflicted by different themes are described. This paper does a qualitative analysis of a novel 'Captain Pantoja and his Special Service' produced to comprehend the retrotopian viewpoint. According to the results, every novelist favoured the retrotopian perspective, imagining a perfect past as a more reasonable way to deal with their horrific present. The main character of this works experiences trauma and sees the end of the world both internally and externally, yet they are all on a journey into the past and looking for their lost identities. This study covers a research void in the area of dystopian literature pertaining to historical or retrotopian studies. Additionally, it would provide fresh opportunities to investigate the potential for experimenting with developing a novel theory or genre.

1. Introduction

Dystopian fiction is one of the most prominent genres in the world of literature. It educates the people to look around and find the major problems of the society. It starts with the writings of Aldous Huxley and George Orwell. It is marked by the two big happenings of the society: the great suppression by dictatorial government and communism along with the development of scientific technology and the publication of the world-famous books Brave New World and Nineteen Eighty-Four. These are considered dystopian fiction's masterpieces till yet as they have highly influenced other writers. About the Brave New World it is given that it, 'seems to imply that the conflicts within human nature are worth preserving, since they make us interesting, heroic, and tragic, Huxley himself was committed to treating mental and emotional illness by any means necessary.'(Buchnan 2016) Long before the major dystopian era Johnathan Swift wrote Gulliver's

Travel that influenced future dystopian fiction. This ironical novel relates the narrative of a sea traveler who hits strange kingdoms where dwarfs, giants, mad people were living. In reality utopian and dystopian are idiotic states. One of the earliest dystopian novels written is in 1993, The Giver by Lois Lowry is about a perfect society in which each and every choices are made as per our requirements. The story is set after the devastation period that destroys the earth and pushes in a new way of living where individuality is demoralized and the citizens tends to corrupt them by the dystopian society. The idea of 'All Is Well' is given to all the citizens so they feel that everything is going well.

These dystopian societies have a protagonist whose vision is focused on goodness and their role is to make other citizens to analyze the right and wrong condition for their own betterment. For example some of the works which commented on the Victoriana society, 'Hardy's assault on Victorian

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morality was anticipated by Samuel Butler (1835-1902), the author of *Erewhon* (1873), a dystopian novel.' (Alexander 2000)

During the 1960s, 'Boom Phenomena' came in the Latin American visible for the first time worldwide which is basically an unexpected burst of literature. But few censurer states that instead of sudden flowering of writers. The Latin American literature was now in the limelight unlike its earlier stage of being unknown to majority of people. It also proves the point that, 'Literature is a mode of communication and it communicates the readers with the realities of the world with view of different intellectuals in order to seek experience and knowledge.' (Awan 2016)

It is mainly focused around four central figures, the so-called : Carlos Fuentes (1928-2012), Julio Cortazar (1914-1984), Gabriel Garcia Marquez (1927-) and Mario Vargas Llosa (1936-) they were all different in writing attitude but one in projecting the Latin America literature boldly. Their novels were somewhat opposed by their society's culture. The Big Four of Latin American writers boom have gone beyond the boundaries of the society in their spirit of experimentation in writing. They have used the most extraordinary language and among all Mario Vargas Llosa is the biggest rebellious man among the four legends in the boom group.

Mario --skillful and fond of literature in Spanish world-- was awarded with the nobel prize in literature in 2010. He made an advanced arrival who caught the attention of society internationally. Above all, one thing sets him apart from the other Boom writers, he has always remained an optimist and whose aim is to a portray a complex picture of contemporary Peru showing an artistic complexity demanding for the societal justice. His novels are often mixes technical experimentation with the findings of the harsh social realities of Latin America. His vision is on the exposure of the complex Peru's corrupt moral social values. Dystopian societies take two forms: for the betterment of world or the society taking on the system of belief or a new government that comes out to be oppressive, tyrannical and inhumane. It starts with veritable desire to save the world and ends up with the harm to humanity's existence. Common themes in dystopian literature is societies regulated

by the government existence, corrupt government, the importance of working together to stand up against things that are wrong etc.

2. Reviews and Discussion

Dystopia:

Dystopia is a subjective term for fictional work, the meaning of which is narrowed and complicated. It has the theme of exploitation in the modern world. It shows the reality of the society where the common people are convinced to live in the best world but it is the worst scenario for them. Mario's version of writing on dystopia is just like a, 'detects in Vargas Llosa's the old dichotomy between 'barbarism' and 'civilization'.' (Carlos 2013)

Dystopia in fiction:

The uncontrolled and rash life of the 20th century created a terror in the mind of the thinkers and writers and these people addressed the problem critically in their writing. Debt, depression, disease, famine, mass damage is the common problem of the dystopian world. Some of the critiques gave the opinion that all the dystopian writes are talking about the different idea about it. As in the movies of the Batman the society is shown with lot of problem and the insensitivity of the police can be one view of it and the second view can be where we find that the following points can be taken up for dystopian literature:

- a) It must be criticizing the social reality.
- b) It talks about the bad plight of the society because of all.
- c) It focuses the unpleasantness of the society in which the writer lives.

Current dystopian trends:

The new literature emerged with the topics of air pollution, global warming and social topics such as obesity which is making humankind critical. Claeys suggests that "the addition of detectable global warming to the list of the world's political problems played a major role in refocusing popular argument on individual responsibility.

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Totalitarian government and the oppression are major characteristic features of a government. In most of the fiction of this type, the use of technology and the government trend are the main topics to be discussed. Dystopian condition shows that the world will divide into two major categories one is of heads and the other section is of subjects; subjects are servile band for the heads.

Dystopian Themes:

a. All pervasive Politics:

Under the purview of the Politics, we find that people are having negative view about life and they pretend to show the good change in the society whereas the change is not at all there or the change is leading the people towards complete destruction.

b. The Danger of Government:

During commonwealth of nations, the term government refers to the group of people that exercise executive authority in a state government of any kind. A lawless and unprincipled people gain administrative control and use government force to fulfill their own selfish ends. They are driven by their own corruption. Nineteen Eighty-Four is part of the big three of the dystopian science fiction novels. This could very well be the most recognizable of the big three as '1984' synonyms with tyrannical government; this Orwell's detailed novel shows how a government can manipulate the people by manipulating the truth and manipulating the news.

c. Economics:

Dystopia is a controlled system of a state; Black marketing in the system for the essential products to oppress the common people and keeping the common people away from the controlling authorities are often seen in such systems. A large level privatization and showing an open market for all but controlled by few people are also a trend in the dystopian world. A troubled person starts learning due to his or her frustration in the world and the system tries to keep them ignorant and poor.

D. Social Stratification:

The next theme of the dystopian is social stratification which is basically grouping of

societies. dystopia is the desire to impose numerous restrictions on life in the form of social stratification where grouping of society is done for eg In Brave New World groups like Alphas, Betas are formed. In Ypsilon Minus by Herbert W. Franke people are divided into numerous alphabetically ranked groups.

E. Family:

Family has been eliminated in certain fiction such as Brave New World and ongoing attempts are made to prevent it from re-establishing itself as a collective institution. In Brave New World mother and father are considered indecent in the brave new world.

f. Religion:

Spiritual groups play the role of the oppressed and oppressions. In Brave New World, the establishments of the state included looping of the tops of all crosses (as symbols of Christianity)

g. Identity:

Common people are treated like slaves as in a Russian novel Weby Yevgeny Zamyatin(1921) people are given numbers as they don't have any identity apart from mere a number. In some other works like Kurt Vonnegut's Harrison's society forces people to accept the norms of real inequality. People feel as their body is divided into two parts; one part can perceive the corruption and the other part which is accepting the world as it is under the tyrannical system.

H. Violence:

The height of violence is when the youngsters are given the mentality of violence as the solution to their problems. These youngsters are killing their own age youngsters and that is the most strange example of distorted mentality.

i. Nature:

In the urban society like the Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451 we see that The Giver shows a society where people are trying to control the climate by science and the psychological aspects pharmaceutically. This type of experimentation is against the system of Nature.

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A major change in the climate can be seen in the work of Forster's *The Machine Stops* where people have to live in an underground because of the climatic change and that is also controlled by a company National. He tell us that how the rooms will be their without light and people will be staring at the ceiling made by wires. People are living in an underground world where light is missing from the underground world for the last two years and people have not swum in the sea water for such a long time and breathed in an open air.

J. Order and Control Vs Freedom and Chaos:

This theme centres around how society has grown to oppress that would fill the plot of these novels, e.g. *Nineteen-Eighty-Four*, *Anthem*. Propaganda: Propaganda is seen in many dystopian works as a mean of controlling and forcing ideals into society particularly in oppressive countries where many dystopian novels were written eg in , *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *Fahrenheit 451*. Specially, in the novel 'Fahrenheit' we find that, 'The frequent usage of words like, 'happy, unhappy, and happiness" throughout the narrative manifests the state's and the characters' obsession and infatuation with the condition of being happy in this hedonistic, pleasure-centered society.' (ATASOY 2021)

k. Altruism Vs Egoism:

This theme centres on society's ideals and its people concerns about whether one should work for the greater good to the point of oppression or by one's self and possibly gain at the suffering of others for example *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *Anthem*. The struggle against dictatorial government is a frequent theme in dystopian literature characterized by extreme oppression and despondence. Dystopian novels make readers aware of their own personal independence and what that independence is taking place away. Teenagers love that dystopian novels have created a whole new business for movies, merchandise and more. The basic focus of dystopian literature is to make readers think about how these dystopian societies relate to the real world.

Problem statement

The dystopias are profoundly pessimistic visions of the future. They are fictitious depictions of the anxieties of today (Baccolini & Tom, 2003; Booker, 1994). They were initially intended as forecasts of the abuse of scientific knowledge, political and economic power. A handful of them have to do with unethical behaviour or negligence demonstrated by biologists, astronomers, and political figures. The utopian idea of obtaining human happiness has only persisted in its ideal form. The question is whether we have lost trust in utopias and should instead begin to believe that dystopia will occasionally occur as a result of one or more human defects. It's also unclear whether readers should make connections between the depicted dystopian worlds and the actual events taking place.

3. Research Methodology

To conduct this research, a qualitative research design was chosen. To discover the 'how's' and 'whys' of the qualitative approach, descriptive and narrative rhetoric is needed (Yin, 2011). In order to answer the "how" and "why" issues, this study also concentrated on the events and each novel sampled for this study's themes. To choose the novels, the non-probability, purposive sampling method was used.

4. Results

Saint Thomas More explained the word 'Utopia' as a society where everything is perfect and as desired by anyone in the world which may be called a dreamland. Utopia was the name of his book published in the year 1516. Contrary to this, 'Dystopia' is an exactly an opposite concept which shows malfunctioning of the government and futility of social norms which mar the life of people. Disorder, abuse, desolation, and complete annihilation are the recurrent themes under Dystopia. Works based on the dystopian world are serving as reference books in which one can look up the human faults like greed, impatient nature, and posing the self as superpower. These characteristics grow and form a bleak force to maintain social control without winning the consent of the people like tyrannical rule. Thomas More finds the irrelevance of the expectation for a Utopian world as

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it is a 'no place' comparing it to the real pathetic scenario of the universe. Malfunctioning of the government and social protocols are infect moving totally in the opposite direction trying to make this world a better place to live in without affection and empathy. Unanimously, dystopian literature works as a mirror to show the people the real problem of the society and it warns them to be cautious about such a stifling atmosphere in which healthy and prosperous life has zero possibility.

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Story* (1985) shows the ultra-modern man-controlled society of US, H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1895) shows the eroding machines and industrial development, George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945) shows the unity of pigs against the human beings, and Anthony Burgess *An Accuracy Orange* (1962) parodies a fake social etiquette where totalitarianism controls the people and they repress any uprising force against their bogus system, these all iconic works are the major examples of dystopian fictional works. Moreover, to reveal the dystopian world one can find in one's reading that people live a vapid and barren .

life without any deep satisfaction as a major trait of it. It is seen in the work like *Brave New World* written by Aldous Huxley where people are drugged to be happy but they miss the sadness as the real essence of life. Moreover, in the dystopian society, 'genetic engineering, artificial birthing, sexual promiscuity, and the suppression of all emotions are the tools by which the government controls the populace.' (D'Ammassa, 2005) The major issues which are raised in any dystopian fiction are government control, natural annihilation, mechanical control, endurance, and loss of independence. Under the focal point of government control, it is seen, either the strict government is prevailing or there is no government at all. For instance, in 1984 written by George Orwell, it is seen that the control of government is strict and individuals were observed or found under espionage. Rejecting the government and living a self-composed life is the outcome of any dystopian world as Ursula K. Le Guin's work *Continually Returning Home* shows Kesh people who renounce the government and its life. Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* shows Panem-- a future country

where the government holds a large part of the assets including people under their control. This work shows the importance of sacrifice which is needed when the society is bereft of all types of humanitarian traits. Adding to the list, Aldous Huxley's *Courageous of-the-art Existence* repeatedly displays the adverse effect of innovation and the futile activities of controlling the lives of individuals. Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Long for Electric Sheep?* *Roped into San Francisco* shows the creation of the android robots led to the existence of human beings in danger. M.T. Anderson's *Feed* shows a chip placed into the cerebrums of Americans. Majorly, dystopian fiction is located at some destructed places as Cormac McCarthy's *The Street* written in 2006 projects a place after the war. James Dashner's *The Labyrinth Sprinter* youngsters are caught up in an ever-evolving labyrinth. Thus, the harsh forces regularly increase the level of resistance in the people and make them slaves. People later battle for their betterment but fail to come out of it. Stephen Ruler's *The Running Man* published in 1982 spotlights a personality who takes risks in life to earn money for his family. William Golding's *Lord of Flies* published in 1954, works on a theme as a group of students are caught up on an island as their plane is shot in a nuclear war. Jeanne DuPrau's work *The City of Coal* is set in an underworld called Ash where people are trying to work against imminent danger. The loss of independence is another visible problem in the dystopian world. Beam Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* shows a firefighter whose activity is to consume books because without the habit of reading the societal people won't able to think unreservedly and innovatively. People seek independence and they even do strange things to keep a record of this tough time. Lois Lowry's *The Provider* (1993) finds a boy who is just 12 years old and he is designated to keep the record of the time till they achieve freedom and equality. All these work gives an introductory idea of the dystopian world which will get connect further to the major issues of the selected studies of Mario Vegas in this research work.

Popular Thoughts about Dystopia

Vargas is not famous as the other famous Latin American authors like Gabriel Garcia Marque or Julio Cortazar but he learnt a lot by reading literature

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of his time and his favorite author was Mark Twain. Mario's distinct work *Conversation in Cathedral* shows blatantly the exploitation of the whole age on the behalf of the mundane political system as it revolves around fascism under General Manuel Odría from 1948 until 1956 in Peru. This book is even the full-fledged form of the earlier depiction of the dystopian world by Mario in Peru and it is the main work to be explored for this research. Analytical study of Mario Vargas Llosa novels is processed further to develop the idea of a dystopian world deeper. His style of writing needs to be explored to see the pattern of his exploration of social problems in Peru as generally the writing style gets affected deeply with the personal incidents. Vargas Llosa says about his perception of writing that if he can give the element of nonconformity in his writing then the aim of writing in the contemporary time is fulfilled. *The Time of the Hero* his first novel mirrors his very own encounters at the Leoncio Prado military foundation and the corruption prevailing over there and this essence makes this work a 'bildungsroman'. A few cadets of the military institute structure themselves into a pack under the authority of a cadet called Jaguar. This group of Jaguar selected Cava to steal a science test to share it among them. Another cadet El Esclava known as the Slave observes the robbery but obeys to the code of respect shared by the group. About this novel, it is also stated that, "Vargas Llosa builds a multilayered society based on exploitation on physical, material, and moral levels." (Mambrol, 2019) It is also noticed that none of the hero could overcome his problems in this novels and there is no hero in this work. *Conversation in cathedral* thus portrays society torn by debasement and political difficulty. It shows a strong political character Cayo Bermúdez who ruins the lives of all characters like a rotten apple. About his novel, we find that, "Vargas Llosa constructs this enormous novel's edifice upon the running dialogue between Santiago and his father's former chauffeur, a dialogue that takes place in the Cathedral." (Mambrol, 2019) The revelation that Santiago Zavala is Bola de Oro is very strong for the readers. This work is thus a political allegory on oppressive system. *The Green House* begins with the bloodshed as Palomino Molero is crucified on a tree. In his 1973 production *Captain Pantoja and special service* investigate the defilement of the government in militarism.

Commander Pantaleón Pantoja is a model official who has confidence in the estimations of administration, acquiescence, and order of the military. However, it is amusing when he is dispatched by his administrator to sort out a mystery prostitution administration for the sex-starved officers positioned in the Peruvian wilderness. It is considered as one of the masterpieces, "This excellent translation of the 1973 novel *Pantoja y las visitadoras* is a significant contribution to the substantial body of Hispanic fiction that has been made available in English in recent years." (Special Services, 2015) Pantaleón conveys out the allotted work with military energy with fortunate effectiveness.

Captain Pantoja is explained over the period of three years from 1955 to 1958 and the Pantaleón Pantoja is the main protagonist of this novel. He is being in the army promoted on a higher rank and then expecting to be given more serious orders with the higher post. Surprisingly, he is given a strange task to handle the issue of the physical need of the soldier in the remote region of the Amazon forest. This place is known as Liquitos and there the rape cases have been reported because the army people go uncontrollable due to their aloof posting where physical pleasure or family life was not in access to them. His wife Pocha and mother Leonor were excited to find that Pantoja has been promoted but they had no idea about the obscene task assigned to him as a highly secret mission. He was a man of merit and never gave in to any of the bad habits like smoking or consuming alcohol. He was a caring son and loyal husband but his special duties changed him. In the beginning, it was a big dilemma for Pantoja to take up this task but later under the pride of his promotion he threw himself for this task unthinkably. This service of his was given the professional name Audit Services for Garrisons and Border-Related Posts, (SVGPFPA). In the manner he recruited the prostitutes for this work was the highly sophisticated manner by taking interviews of the girls and women and even by physically examining them for the service of army personals. "He recruits the service providers personally through a rigorous system of the interview, physical examination and, of course, intercourse He does it in a detached professional manner without letting himself be emotional. ... He manages to discipline

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the bunch of wild and temperamental girls and makes them work under a set of military rules. The visitadoras are happy that Captain Pantoja has provided them with a regular income and working hours... freeing them from the risk and hazards of their vocations and the cruelty of pimps."(Latin American affairs, 2009) Later he developed great relations with the pimps of that area and prostitutes ("visitadoras") and developed a strong network to supply girls and women to the soldiers to quell their physical needs. He dealt with everyone with justice as, "Each visitadora pleasures 20 soldiers a day and the timing of each service is limited to 20 minutes. To speed up the service, Pantoja arranges reading materials for the soldiers, while they are waiting, so that they are sufficiently stimulated and prepared. The service fees are deducted from the soldiers' pay." (latinamericanaffairs, 2009) He even involved with a woman called Olga Arellano (nicknamed "the Brazilian"). Later the wife of captain left him being unfaithful for her and having physical relation with Olga. Earlier he had good control over everything but this kind of work cannot remain concealed and the local radio jockey started blackmailing him and people made jokes of his mother and his wife. He found that the lady(Olga) who was with him for his all need was killed by some goons and now the captain was nostalgic and gave a great farewell to her as he spoke at her death, "we have worn our noble uniform of an officer in the Peruvian army to accompany you to your last dwelling place, with our head held high and with a full sense of responsibility to proclaim that you had fallen as a valiant soldier in the service of our beloved country Peru. You are an unfortunate martyr to the fulfillment of duty. Your spirit guides us daily and stimulates us to the completion of our duty with the selflessness and perfection with which you performed it."(Captain Pantajo, 45) Suddenly another matter emerged in that area that a monk called Brother Francisco started brainwashing the people in that region and he made them believe that crucifixion is the way to salvation so, he was known as the 'Brother of Ark'. A lot of animals were killed in this fake pursuit under him and once a child was also killed. Once the limit was exceeded and a lady was killed then the army gave orders to catch this monk who was creating a nonsensical system under his fake ideology. It ends with the incident that the saint himself was hanged on a cross. Later Pantajo shuts

down this unit under the pressure of his superiors and is given one more chance to continue his service at a distant place called Lake Titicaca (Peruvian Andes). This novel is claimed as a comedic novel by Mario Vargas Llosa. Entropy is the more typical instrument in captain Pantoja and the special service.

5. Conclusion

Mario Vargas's style of writing is identical to the Latin American authors as the form and the content match each other strictly. The narrator is unobtrusive and switches from one character to the other characters very easily and unaffectedly. This is kind of objectivity is visibly felt by the readers. Moreover, there is no scope of objectivity too as the characters give no option about the incidents or happenings but just let the things go as it is written in the destiny. This kind of distance from any conclusion or opinion gives openness to the reader to employ brain to understand the text. Vargas Llosa has included numerous reasonable subtleties in his books. He has a careful feeling of the setting. His books depend on exact certainties, references, date and names. A portion of his geological references incorporates maps for the comprehension of the peruser.

Cooperation and competition are particularly significant with regards to Mario Llosa's fiction. He ties legitimately into other related topics, for example, trust and control. In crises, individuals can cooperate or they can be at each other's throats. Except if they are the main individuals left, survivors, in the end, experience others, and how their interface characterizes them. The clear competition brings is energizing, yet it can show from numerous points of view. Other than straightforward brutality, characters may contend on a social level for mates or partners. They may likewise contend over assets, maybe depending on burglary. Indeed, even inside generally durable gatherings, individuals will butt heads with each other. Connections are liquid and new breaks or bonds can frame consistently. Participation is less clearly energizing yet not less significant. Individuals are characteristically social, and it's unreasonable if no gatherings or groups structure. Furthermore, collaboration and rivalry aren't fundamentally unrelated.

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Survivors can cooperate towards specific finishes while being inconsistent over others. Individuals are convoluted, and our connections by and a large mirror that dystopian worlds are generally riotous spots. Extremely critical tragic settings are unpleasant in sharp edge sprinter. Humankind is never depicted as being in impending peril of vanishing yet defeated by the stale system. Stories that depict annihilation as a quick danger are more activity arranged, though those that present it as a long haul risk, for the most part, have more dramatizations.

Development is more inconspicuous and less recognizable than elimination. It's like development, as both suggest an adjustment in humanity's conditions. Nonetheless, advancement is explicitly an adjustment in conduct or physiology in response to outside elements. The movement of innovation takes a small amount of the time but natural changes do. Advanced mobile phones, coolers, and penicillin all changed mankind's remaining in a concise timeframe. Nonetheless, innovative advancement still requires some serious energy and assets. While stories don't reflect reality, and the crowd generally acknowledges that, making innovations also rapidly can even now break submersion or make it seem as though you're giving your character a free pass. In the novel Captain Pantoja and the special service characters respond to their terrible conditions in various manners. If the whole setting is established despondently, at that point expectation would require a sensational and positive move on the planet. Expectation exhibits assurance regardless of challenges and shows characters with a solid-will. All things considered as an excess of expectation can be an indication of naivety or leading somebody into inconvenience. Expectation drives characters toward an objective though despair advances inaction. Survivors may battle with misery and expectation after a major misfortune, wondering why they should try attempting if they'll just come up short. Rarely, a few solid characters break liberated from hopelessness and discover their inspiration once more. How characters adapt even with overpowering happenings shows how extreme

they are. Mario Vargas Llosa has a wide scope of subjects to draw upon. Which topic you pick and how you use it will decide the kind of story you're telling. Will you center on the light in obscurity, the certainty of progress, or fearlessness even with death? The subjects fall along with a wide range utilizing various tones to deliver energetic pictures.

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